

When Margaret Ran Away

By COLIN S. COLLINS

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"Lower twelve, right hand side," said the Pullman conductor as he pocketed the money and handed Merivale the punched ticket.

Vance Merivale picked up his suitcase and made his way to his seat. It had been foolish not to have made a reservation in advance, but somehow he had not liked to. He wanted to wait the chances of fate until the last moment—and fate had been unkind.

Instead of the hoped for reconciliation with Margaret Ripley there had been a quarrel even more bitter than those which had gone before, and he had left her tearfully protesting that she would leave town and give up her career rather than suffer from these scenes.

Merivale wanted her to give up her career because he had found she could not find time for love and business in her busy life, and he thought he needed her love more than she needed a career.

He had made his last appeal, and now he was on his way to Chicago to make a fresh start. He would leave the city to her, since he could not live there without her.

He dropped his bag into the seat and threw himself down. The car was crowded, and for a moment he did not recognize Margaret. Then his glance wandered across the aisle and encountered those blue eyes which had made such havoc with his heart.

Now, instead of being melting they were scornful, and something in her expression held him as he half rose to cross to her.

He made a violent pretense of reading, but it was pretense only, for across the pages as he turned them there fitted those angry eyes, and instead of sensing the words his brain rang with the echo of her last words to him: "I will leave town since I am not permitted to have peace here."

The dusk was falling before he had a chance to speak. The dining car had been put on and Margaret was among



MERIVALE READ, "I HAD TO SAY YES."

those who answered the first call. Vance, strolling after her, met her in the vestibule between the two cars.

"Marge," he cried, "won't you let me speak to you?"

"Speak to me? Why should I let you speak to me when you have done this despicable thing?"

"What do you mean?" he gasped.

"What have I done that should be characterized as despicable?"

"Following me in this fashion?"

"Following!" he echoed blankly.

"Why, Marge, I made up my mind a week ago to this step. I wrote out to Chicago for a position, and I came to see you last night to say goodbye."

"Really?" she asked wistfully.

He drew a letter from his pocket and showed her the postmark four days old. "Here is Grigg's letter," he said simply, "in answer to mine."

She glanced at the opening line, "In reply to yours of last week," and handed it back with shining eyes.

"I thought," she said softly, "that you had found out that I was running away, and had followed me."

"And I was merely trying to give you the whole of New York," he laughed. "I think it was fate that brought us together."

"There are good and bad fates," she replied. "One of the latter will cause you to lose your dinner."

"What do I care for dinner?" he cried impetuously.

She stopped her ears with her tiny fingers. "I shan't listen to a word until you have come back from dinner," she declared.

"For one moment he clasped her hand in his and passed through to the dining car, with a better appetite than he had felt for a week.

He was at her side again in twenty minutes. "Now that I am fed and clothed in my right mind," he said, "do you mind explaining why you are running away with me?"

"I am not," she protested. "I was trying to run away from you."

"Rather ridiculous," he laughed, "to be running away from each other together. I prefer to believe that we are running away together."

"No," she said decidedly. "I am going to run away."

"Why," he begged. "Here we are, both headed for Chicago. Cannot you

read the handwriting of fate in the adventure?"

"No," she said. "I cannot marry you, Vance. I admit that I love you, but we are always quarreling, and our married life would be short and miserable."

"Sweetheart," he pleaded, "cannot you understand that the quarrels have all been on the one topic? Remove the cause and we should be happy, dear."

"Happy," she scoffed—"happy when you demand that I shall give up all my hopes of a career to sink to the level of a commonplace kitchen drudge!"

"Not that," he corrected. "I simply ask you to give up your work on the paper and in your leisure do better and more ambitious work."

"I must begin at the bottom of the ladder," she defended.

"In the four years I have known you," he reminded, "you have been sitting on that same bottom rung, which in this case happens to be the woman's desk on the Home Topics. You are grinding your life away at this work and have neither time for better things nor even the time to be nice to the man you admit you love."

"But I must work," she cried.

"Certainly," he conceded, "but work to some effect. Don't drudge and grind until all life becomes a matter of copying recipes out of an old cook-book and heading them 'Dainty New Dishes For the Home.' That is what I object to."

"Vance," she said, "I have been unkind, haven't I?"

"Very," he said cheerfully.

"And if I say yes you will let me write?"

"Stories and things—at home," he agreed hopefully.

"I'll think about it," she said. "Now go and smoke."

Her eyes compelled him, and he went, leaving her to think.

When he returned, her berth had been made down, and a great wave of disappointment swept over Merivale. Had she sent him away merely to escape him—to be rid of him?

As he threw himself disconsolately into his seat the porter approached. "Lady in lower 'leben done asked me to call yo' 'tention to dis beah note," he said, pointing to a small white envelope tucked down between the plush cushions.

"Oh, all right, George," he said. The porter grinned knowingly.

Merivale tore open the envelope and read: "I had to say yes. This is an emolument; not an escape."

"I say, George," called Merivale. "Yasair."

"Here," and Merivale thrust the most substantial tip into the porter's hand that individual had received for months.

English House Gardens.

American children learn that London is the center of trade, with a dense population, and they grow up with the idea that it is a mart perpetually overhung with fog and smoke. To have a private residence in New York city is a luxury possible only to the rich, and none but a multimillionaire could live in a house with a garden.

When the American girl therefore went to have tea with some friends in moderate circumstances she was astonished to find them living in a large house, with a little garden in front and a spacious one in the rear. Tea was served in the garden.

Her mind reverted to a suburban house at home that had about as much land as this English one. The back yard was used as a drying place for clothes. The front yard was a smoothly clipped, flower bedded lawn kept for show, so open to the street that it was of no use to the family.

"No; it is not like home," said the American girl, wondering if every one in London had a garden or a terrace or a park.—London Telegraph.

A Patent Lawyer.

A lawyer who makes a specialty of patent business, no matter just where his office is located, was called to the farther west in a case involving a mortgage on a farm. The preliminary hearing was before an old fashioned justice of the peace, who had no high regard for the ways of men from the city. At some point in the case the magistrate put in a few remarks, and the visiting lawyer collided with him. The discussion grew warm, and at last the magistrate, forgetting his dignity and his position, became personal.

"Who are you anyway?" he blurted out.

"Well," replied the lawyer, "I'm an attorney."

"Praps you are, but I never heard one talk like you do. What kind of a one are you?"

"I'm a patent attorney."

The magistrate rubbed his chin for thought.

"Well, all I've got to say is," he said slowly, "that when the patent expires I don't believe you can ever get it renewed again."

A Criticism.

"What is your favorite poem?" "I haven't any," answered Mr. Cumrox. "Poetry always strikes me as merely an effort on the author's part to show off how much he knows about capital letters and punctuation marks." —Washington Star.

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